

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

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IO-13 ACDA-07 AS-01 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4649

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SEOUL 5181

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, KS

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT SENDS MESSAGE TO ASSEMBLY AS INTERPELLATIONS
BEGIN

REF: SEOUL 5109 (DTG 200818Z JUN 77)

SUMMARY: FIRST TWO DAYS OF ASSEMBLY SESSION APPEAR TO HAVE GONE ACCORDING EXPECTATIONS (REFTEL), WITH GOVERNMENT EXPRESSING REGRET OVER TROOP WITHDRAWAL BUT PRESENTING IT AS FAIT ACCOMPLI AND OPPOSITION ESSENTIALLY ACCEPTING THIS AND AVOIDING STRONG DIRECT ATTACK ON GOVERNMENT. TONE SO FAR HAS BEEN RELATIVELY QUIET AND SUBDUED. THERE HAS BEEN SOME MILD REPEAT MILD CRITICISM OF U.S.

1. IN OPENING DAY MESSAGE TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY ON JUNE 21, PRESIDENT SAID HE HOPED PRESENT LEVEL OF U.S. TROOPS WOULD REMAIN IN KOREA UNTIL TENSIONS EASED BUT IN ANY CASE, NATION SHOULD FULLY PREPARE ITSELF FOR EVENTUALITY OF U.S. DEPARTURE. MESSAGE READ BY PRIME MINISTER WAS STRONG REMINDER TO NATIONAL ASSEMBLY, WHICH IS EXPECTED TO CONSIDER RESOLUTION CALLING FOR U.S. TROOPS TO REMAIN, THAT PRESIDENT PREFERS TO SOLVE PROBLEM NOT BY FIGHTING IT BUT THROUGH CONSIDERATION OF COMPENSATORY MEASURES AND ADEQUATE PRE-
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WITHDRAWAL PREPARATIONS.

2. DURING FIST DAY OF INTERPELLATIONS, ROKG PRIME MINISTER AND OTHER MINISTERS CARRIED FORTH PRESIDENT'S THEME AS EXPECTED IN QUIET ALMOST SUBDUED SESSION NOTABLE FOR ABSENCE OF USUAL CHEERING AND JEERING. YUCHONGHOE'S KU POM-MO CRITICIZED WITH SOME HEAT, HOWEVER, DECISION TO WITHDRAW U.S. TROOPS, QUESTIONING RELIABILITY

OF U.S. COMMITMENTS TO ASIA AND KOREA BOTH. KU STRESSED THAT ROKG SHOULD IN FUTURE AVOID OVER-RELIANCE ON FOREIGN POWER. NDP SUPREME COMMITTEEMAN SIN TO-HWAN ATTEMPTED TO PUT BLAME FOR CARTER DECISION ON ROKG ITSELF. LATER IN DAY, DRP'S NKANG SANG-OK SAID IT WOULD BE ALL RIGHT TO MAKE RESOLUTION OPPOSING WITHDRAWAL BUT IT MUST BE CAREFULLY WORDED SO AS NOT TO UNNECESSARILY WORRY PEOPLE. DURING GOVERNMENT RESPONSE, PRIME MINISTER REPEATED THAT ROKG ACCEPTED CARTER DECISION ALTHOUGH IT STILL CONSIDERED IT UNWISE. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT UNC SHOULD REMAIN, EVEN AFTER TROOP WITHDRAWAL IS UNDERWAY AND THAT U.S. AND ROKG WERE NEARING AGREEMENT ON SUBJECT.

3. KU ALSO RAISED NEW YORK TIMES ALLEGATION THAT U.S. LISTENED IN ON BLUE HOUSE CONVERSATIONS BUT NOTED PARENTHETICALLY THAT REASONS GIVEN IN REPORT THAT U.S. WAS WORRIED ABOUT NORTH/SOUTH KOREAN RAPPROCHEMENT IN 1975 WAS PATENTLY RIDICULOUS. PRIMIN SAID GOVERNMENT HAD MADE MILD ISSUE OF IT ONLY BECAUSE NEWSPAPER WHICH CARRIED IT WAS SO PROMINENT.

4. EARLY EDITIONS OF PRESS ARE GIVING STRONG PLAY TO TWO OF SIN'S PROPOSALS. FIRST WAS THAT PRESIDENT PAK MEET WITH JIMMY CARTER IN PERSON; GOVERNMENT, PERHAPS TAKEN A BIT BY SURPRISE, DID NOT DIRECTLY RESPOND TO THIS SUGGESTION AS THEY DID TO ALMOST ALL OTHERS. SIN ALSO PROPOSED THAT GOVERNMENT SHOULD APPOINT CONSTITUTIONAL DELIBERATION COUNCIL FOR PURPOSE OF STUDYING POSSIBLE CHANGES TO ROK CONSTITUTION. THIS HAS LONG BEEN SENSITIVE CONFIDENTIAL

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ISSUE AND ONE WHICH, IN PART, MAY HAVE ORIGINALLY BROUGHT ON FIRST INTRODUCTION OF 1974 EMERGENCY MEASURES. PRIMIN SAID THAT IF SUCH COMMITTEE IS NEEDED, HE WOULD NOT STAND IN WAY BUT IT WAS MORE PROPER ISSUE FOR NATIONAL ASSEMBLY AS WHOLE TO CONSIDER.

5. OTHER ISSUES RAISED WERE PREDICTABLE. SIN TO-HWAN SAID THAT FORMER KCIA CHIEF KIM HYONG-UK AND OTHERS WHO HAD ADJUSTED STATUS IN U.S. WERE "SELLING OUT ROKG AND PEOPLE" WITH DANGEROUS ALLEGATIONS BUT IT WAS NOTEWORTH THAT THEY HAD RECENTLY SERVED IN RESPONSIBLE, EVEN SENSITIVE POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT. SIN ASKED FOR RELEASE OF MYONGDONG PRISONERS AND FOR REPEAL OF EMERGENCY MEASURES, SAYING SUCH MEASURES WERE TO HAVE BEEN PROMULGATED FOR SHORT TERM PROTECTION ONLY AND IT WAS WEAKNESS OF GOVERNMENT THAT MEASURES HAD ALREADY ENDURED ALMOST FIVE YEARS. SIN ALSO CRITICIZED NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR REUNIFICATION AND ASKED PAK TO RESIGN AS DRP HEAD AS COJCIL SHOULD BE HEADED BY NON-PARTISAN LEADER. IT WAS CLOSEST ANYONE HAD COME TO CRITICISM OF PAK HIMSELF IN THIS SESSION.

6. PRIMIN VIRTUALLY IGNORED KIM HYONG-UK ISSUE BUT IN RESPONSE TO MYONGDONG INQUIRY, SAID "IF IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT RELEASE OF (PRISONERS) IS IN ACCORD WITH CONSTITUTION

AND PERTINENT LASWS. PRISONERS MAY BE RELEASED. THEY MAY NOT BE RELEASED AS RESULT OF ANY POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS." OBSERVERS INTERPRET THIS AS MEANING THAT REPENTENT, NON- TROUBLESOME PRISONERS WILL BE RELESED UNDER AMNESTY CLAUSE BUT THAT (FOREIGN) POLITICAL PRESSURES ARE NOT CONSIDERED "APPROPRIATE." AS FOR EMERGENCY MEASUREES, PRIMIN SAID THAT IN VIEW OF "TENSE SITUATION ON PENINSULA" AND IN LIGHT OF PROPOSED U.S. TROOP WITHDRAWAL, ROKG BELIEVES THIS IS NOT TIME TO EASE (HE DID NOT SAY REPEAL) SUCH MEASURES.

7. IN RESPONSE YUCHONGHOE MEMBER QUESTION DEFENSE MINISTER SAID THAT THERE HAD BEEN NO NOTICEABLE MILITARY MOVEMENT OR MANEUVER BY NORTH KOREAN FORCES SINCE PRESIDENT CARTER HAD ANNOUNCED WITHDRAWAL AND THAT PROSPECTS FOR AGREEMENT WITH U.S. ON COM- CONFIDENTIAL

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PENSATORY MEASURES TO FOLLOW U.S. TROOP REDUCTION WERE "VERY BRIGHT." INTERPELLATION CONTINUED INTO LATE AFTERNOON. SNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MEETING AGENDA, SURVEILLANCE, CENTRAL LEGISLATURE, TROOP REDUCTIONS, PRISONERS RELEASE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 22-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
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